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THE JOURNAL OF SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY.

VOL. XIII.]

JULY, 1879.

[No. 3.

FICHTE'S CRITICISM OF SCHELLING.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF JOHANN GOTTLIEB FICHTE,
BY A. E. KROEGER.

III.

*An Illustration, particularly of the Philosophical Judgment of
our Age.*

[THIS ARTICLE COMPLETES THE CRITICISM; THE FIRST AND SECOND PARTS AP-
PEARED, RESPECTIVELY, IN THE APRIL AND JULY NUMBERS OF THIS JOURNAL
FOR 1878.]

It might be of use to characterize this almost universal insip-
idness and laziness of our age, particularly in matters of
philosophy, in a recent and still existing striking example.
Of the age, I say, in general; for I do not desire that the man
whose name will be mentioned below should believe that I
oppose myself to him as an individual, or even that he is good
enough for me to use him as a representative of that universal
shallowness; in which case I should, indeed, exaggerate and
become unjust towards the others. Only the fact that a pub-
lic — on the whole, nevertheless, better instructed — could
be deceived by him has won for him the honor of being men-
tioned here by name.

For this public had, nevertheless, through Kant's and our

our own writings, been so far instructed as to make the younger students — the old students, grown up in dogmatism, were not converted — attain the conviction, in which they seemed firmly to repose, that reality ought on no account to be posited in the things, but in thinking and the laws of thinking, although no one very well knew how this could be accomplished, when at that very time one of the most confused heads of these our days of confusion, Frederick Wilhelm Schelling, through the spectre of a subjectivism of the Science of Knowledge, which only his excessive want of understanding had created, succeeded in reducing this science of knowledge, by his authority, to an error, — an error which the public, so long as left to itself, had been too sensible to discover, — and in scaring the people back from Kant and the Science of Knowledge, to Spinoza and Plato. The public were astounded, and knew not how further to proceed. They called repeatedly and threateningly upon the author of the Science of Knowledge to refute, if he could, what neither Kant nor the Science of Knowledge were needed to refute, and what ought not to have been mentioned as an open question since the days of Leibnitz. That, by such a course of proceeding, this man has expressed his absolute ignorance of what speculation is and should be, and his natural unfitness for speculation is self-evident and needs no further proof. But in so far as the rest of his dialectical art, talent of composition, sophistical wit, and the dexterity of the man may plead as an excuse for the deceived, and to shun what the man really has and can put to use of mind and talent, it may be instructive to develop and follow his views.

In order to proceed in this development with the utmost fairness, we shall neither take up the former writings of this man nor his so-called identity-system, though the latter has been considered so important that we have been called upon by name (by one of our standing literary tribunals) to either refute or recognize it. Was there in this system, as represented in the second volume of the *Magazine for Speculative Physics* — which representation we shall say only a few words about, in passing — error so dextrously and deceptively

worked out as to render its discovery impossible without outside assistance?

This representation commences with the statement (sec. 1) : "I call reason absolute reason, or reason in so far as it is thought, as the utter indifference of the Subjective and Objective."

Now that by this starting-point the man commenced at the very beginning to distinguish reason from itself, and to renounce being reasonable himself, as well as to consider how he ever could come to make all the assertions which followed—all this the public could not well be supposed to remark, because such a supposition would presuppose the faculty of speculation, which the public, of course, does not possess. But it might well have been seen at once, even without the faculty of speculation, that the one and absolute reason, outside of which nothing was to be, could not be the indifference of the subjective and objective without being in the same undivided essence their difference; that the man, therefore, beside his own indifferent reason, kept another differential reason in view, which might come in very handy in a quiet way, and that this error was not a small, unimportant mistake, but of most significant consequence.

We will also be generous enough to forgive the public its not perceiving that by this statement of the matter, reason was at once completely determined, and in itself ended, *i. e.*, dead; and that its philosophical hero might now, to be sure, repeat his first proposition as often as possible, but never would be able to find a way of getting honestly and logically out of it to a second proposition. But that when he now really, in his own manner, did begin to resurrect the dead, and to relate to and happily demonstrate into this, his reason, all the determinations of nothingness, totality, unity, self-equality, etc., which arise in his following paragraphs, his readers never felt astonished at how he got at *these determinations*, nor ever asked him about it (for if his first statement of the essence of reason had been really exhaustive, these determinations ought to have been deduced from an analysis of that statement, from reason, as necessarily grounded in it; but they never should

have been taken — God only knows wherefrom — and been held separate from reason by mere arbitrariness !) and that his readers did not yet perceive the movement of that differential reason, in the person of their author, had secretly been calculated upon in section 1 ; nay, that they were not even surprised at his material arbitrariness in the arbitrary succession of the predicates which he chose to apply to reason. All this is a little more difficult to forgive.

But what shall we say when we look at these demonstrations ourselves, and discover the contradictions, subterfuges, and absurdities into which an uncultured and confused imagination blindly plunges the author ; and when we see that a logical development of his first proposition leads to the very opposite of his assertion, and when, nevertheless, we are forced to experience how this monstrous system is received otherwise than amidst universal and unceasing laughter ?

Thus, for instance, section 2 states : “ Outside of *reason* is *nothing*, and in *reason* is *all*. If reason is thought, as we have stipulated in section 1, it immediately appears that out of it nothing can be. For, supposing something were outside of reason, then it is either so for reason itself ” — Indeed ! *For itself ?* Why, we have not seen a word in section 1 that anything could be *for* reason. This is tacitly assumed here without our perceiving whence, merely so as to furnish a proof ; and in doing so the author himself has not thought reason as demanded in his section 1, but leads the reader rather to the very opposite view. But, certainly, the proof may, perhaps, be obtained by this reasoning. It is obtained as follows : “ It is either outside of reason for reason itself, and then reason is the subjective, which is against the presupposition ; or it is not for reason itself outside of it, and then reason is related to this outside as objective to objective ; in which case reason is objective, which, again, is against our presupposition. ”

(By the bye, the second half of the proof is without sense or meaning, as the reader may discover for himself, for we have not time to dwell upon it.)

The correct section 2 of the previous section 1 would have been : *In reason and for reason is simply nothing.* If reason

is thought, as we have postulated in section 1, it is immediately clear that neither in nor for reason can anything be. For, supposing anything to be in or for reason, this could be only in so far as it were itself reason; and this anything could only be the subjective, or the objective, or both; for that is all we have in our section 1. But to think reason as the subjective, or the objective, or both, would be opposed to the first statement, that reason is merely the indifference of both.

It is true, this proof presupposes that the one who furnishes the proof does not reflect, in the meanwhile, that in the proof reason is nevertheless for him, and is posited; and that hence the only practical possibility of the proof presupposes precisely that whereof the proof shows the impossibility; and this presupposition is made justly, since the contrary, in a system which is possible only by not reflecting, would be opposed to the very first agreement.

Thus the beginning of section 3 reads: "*Reason is absolutely one, and absolutely self-equal*; for if it were not the former there would be still another ground of the being of reason"—(Here, therefore, in order to have the second proof, we have the second presupposition stealthily brought in, that every being must have a ground. Whence, then, do we know that? Whence, indeed, all at once, the category of ground, and,—above all things,—with a view to prove by it the [formal] unity of reason? Ground is a much more special category, which arises only in the sphere of finite conditions and consequences.)—"still another ground than itself; for reason itself contains the ground only of its own being, not of the being of another reason." Indeed! How do we know this, again? Is this also contained in section 1, or in section 2? But let us relieve him of the question after the whence! Let us pass over his application of the ground-category, and the unproved assertion that reason alone is the ground of itself; what would his section 3 prove, after all? Why could not reason, inwardly and in itself, as reason, remain qualitatively one, even though there were a ground of its formal existence outside of reason? It is true, however, that in this case being would not be one, and reason not all being, and not

one with being. The unity of being, but not of reason, would therefore be proved, if this doubly and triply false proof could prove anything; but our author adds: *Reason is therefore one!* and thus shows that he does not even understand his own proof.

The correct section 3 (concerning the predicate of unity and self-equality), as resulting from the precedent sections 1 and 2, would be as follows:

Reason is absolutely neither One nor self-equal; for if it were, it could be so only in and for itself, since outside of reason there is nothing. Now, it is impossible (sec. 2) that there is anything in and for reason; hence reason cannot be unity and self-equality in and for itself; hence unity and self-equality cannot be at all; hence they also cannot belong to reason.

True, in this proof, it is also presupposed that nobody must reflect, on any account, how he comes, nevertheless, to present unity and equality in this proof; for then the same contradiction between doing and saying which we discovered in the previous proof would arise again, and the whole joke would dissolve into nothingness.

Now, in this manner the man proceeds throughout the whole *scriptum*, and none of the demonstrations which follow are of another nature than those we have quoted. But the result of all these manœuvres is this: that in an utterly fictitious manner, by absolutely cancelling the first proposition from which he started, the specific difference in many real things is explained from the difference of the quantitative relation of the subjective and objective in them. That this explanation is utterly arbitrary and a mere hypothesis is self-evident, for how can anybody arrive at it who does not presuppose as well-known, as a matter of course, that specifically different things do exist, and who has not got it into his head that he is going to explain their differences, whether it please God or no? But that this explanation contradicts and cancels the first fundamental principle appears thus: If reason is the absolute indifference of the subjective and objective, and if there is no other being than that of reason, then this indifference cannot

be cancelled and replaced by a quantitative difference in any being.

But, as I said before, I will not even judge the man by this antiquated sin, which, though the natural-philosophical public may not have recognized it as yet, has probably been already repented of by its author. I will base my investigation of his mind and talent upon another writing, which he himself considers so holy that, by the inscription on its title-page, "Touch it not, Goat, for it burns!" he bids all profane minds to depart at the very doorsteps, and which is really, also, in my estimation, the best, *i. e.*, the least bungler-like, of the numerous productions of his pen. I refer to his work, *Religion and Philosophy*.

The by far greater portion of this work does not pretend to conceal at all that it is merely a free and open play of the imagination, without even the pretence of thinking or investigating. Assertions, assurances, statements, are put forth without the shadow of a proof. All this part condemns itself, and needs not our attention. We proceed at once to the most prominent part of the whole book, which really puts on the air of thinking, and promises to explain the present highest principles of this philosopher — leaving all the while, as I said before, unnoticed, the man's fundamental error of objectivating, and merely considering the ability and dexterity with which he moves about in error.

Beginning at page 18, we have the announcement of a deduction of finite things from the absolute, and a representation of their relation, which ends as follows: "As sure as this absolutely simple essence of intellectual contemplation" — (by the word *essence* he means the *object* of that contemplation; but he has his good reasons, well known to us, why he does not utter that word in this connection, for to do so might lead him into serious difficulties with the science of knowledge) — as "sure as this essence is absoluteness, no other Being can be ascribed to it than what it has through its own conception; for if there could, it would be determined through something else outside of itself, which is impossible."

Let us stop right here, at the swelling tide of this proof, since we cannot get over some things so easily as the author. I understand clearly: if it were not determined through itself, it would be determined through another; that is, if it must be determined *through anything*, of which *must* the proof furnishes no ground, but merely invents it. I see that this proof tears its absolute, which at first was to be one, into two—the determining and the determined—and that it thus begins with an inward and material disjunction (the original and formal disjunction—that is, the seen of a seeing—we will, according to our promise, pass over), whereof he gives no account, which is the first act of blind arbitrariness. If I look closer at this mode of proceeding, I find that the well-known conception of the Absolute as being of itself, from itself, and through itself, is realized here; (Which—as mere conception, outward characteristic, and scheme of the absolute, and mere description of its form, in opposition to the form of the not-absolute, which is not of itself—cannot at all lead us into the absolute, but rather shut it up forever to our eyes), not to remark which is the second blindness. I see, moreover, that the expression “which is impossible,” as it stands, expresses merely an impossibility of thinking, the real importance of which ought, above all things, to have been ascertained, which is the third very great sin of omission. But if I let all this pass and accept the Absolute in its duality as a determining and determined, I still cannot see why it should be in its first quality, as the determining precisely a conception, as I am required to believe without any show of reason, which is the fourth blind arbitrariness. But I see very well, in the meanwhile, why all this had to be stated thus, namely, because there was no other way to get at the desired result: “hence the absolute is generally not *real*, but in itself only *ideal*.”

I will not only be agreeable, but go further; I will really think what the proof demands of me, and thus do what the author neglected to do, for we shall see, after a while, that he really did not think the required result, but wrote down empty words, which, if we should succeed in the promised proof,

would be the fifth blindness. "No being can be asserted of the absolute but that which it has *through* its own conception."

Now, if I have to think this in real earnest, and truly, but not banteringly, as if it were to be true and not true at the same time, I must think that the absolute has a conception of itself, a contemplation of itself, a pictured Being outside of its Being — for this is a conception — and of itself, *i. e.*, of a determined and limited Being, as which it conceives itself. And now I see very clearly (what the author of the proof, who did not truly think, but merely spoke, could have had but dimly in view), that in this manner the absolute can in itself be only ideal; for I suppose I shall be logical enough to view the absolute itself, and its conception of itself, as altogether one and the same, and not to ascribe to it any other formal or material Being, and any other seat and central point of such Being, than in its conception of itself, immediately and wholly. The absolute now again becomes one, determining and determined at the same time in the formal unity of the conception, and the other half of the real determination (which, doubtless, was drawn merely as an assisting line in the construction of the proof) is now wiped out. It is true that, instead of this duality, I now get into my absolute the five-foldness which is inseparable from the form of the conception into which the absolute is now received; but this is unavoidable, and I had better submit with good grace to the unavoidable. But let me on no account hold on and reflect that it is, after all, myself who has this conception of a conception of the absolute, and that I have formed it with conscious arbitrariness at the persuasion of this glorious proof; for by doing so I should fall into the "empty reflection-system," and thus give a far more difficult appearance to the whole matter.

Having thus far cleared matters up, let us proceed: "But equally eternal with the absolutely ideal is the eternal form." Equally eternal? We learn thus, by the way, that the absolutely ideal is, amongst other things, also eternal. Whence do we derive this knowledge, and what does it signify to be eternal? But let us not worry; the author does not intend to

lead us astray here, or to assume anything ; he does not think what he says, and this time does not think anything at all ; he has simply accustomed himself to an extravagant use of the word “ eternal,” and it escapes him here involuntarily ; for if he had thought of his uttering it, he would at the same time have thought of what it might possibly mean ; which, therefore, is the sixth and seventh blindness at one stroke.

Equally eternal, therefore, the eternal form ? This really is a matter of course ; for we have seen already that the absolute, as positively nothing but its conception of itself, is absorbed by this form of the conception, which form is, therefore, as absolute as the absolute itself, since it is the same ; and also as eternal, if the word “ eternal ” is to have any significance, and if the absolute is assumed to be “ eternal.” Now, does the author mean this form of the conception, or another one ? He means another one ; for that he has already, in the self-comprehension of the absolute, a right good, tenable, and even five-fold form, is still unknown to him, from which it very clearly appears that he himself did not think what he required his reader to think, and that our above assertion of this fact is fully confirmed. Why he requires a second form, however, is thus explained : He erroneously supposes that with the first form, even if he should make this form clear to himself, he would not be able to deduce anything from the absolute, — which, after all, is his real purpose. He supposes this erroneously, I say, — at least we, on our part, would not be afraid, if such a self-comprehension of the absolute were given us, to deduce from it, with the greatest ease, heaven, earth, and all the hosts thereof. For in this conception we should have the whole qualitative Being of the absolute, which it contemplates ; and this, I suppose, would doubtless give us all the manifold we might want. All we should have to do would be to open hands and eyes, and accept whatever exists, and hold ready for whatsoever might turn up the always same and easy answer : Why, this is also a qualitative part of the absolute, and this, and this, etc., *ad infinitum*. The only remaining difficulty would be to make comprehensible how others also obtain a knowledge of the Being of the absolute, and a

participation in its comprehension of itself; but since it is incontrovertible that the inner ground-form of the self-comprehension of the absolute is the Ego-form, why, it might be very possible that through this very form every Ego had a participation in the absolute, and became a moment of it; for which somewhat bolder solution of the problem our author is, unhappily, too timid and bashful, holding the absolute, as he does, as far away from him as possible. From this reason the first form remains unused, and a second form must be gotten somewhere, into which, as not quite so bright and noble a form, he hopes, with a somewhat smaller degree of immodesty, to squeeze his personality. There is, therefore, a form of the absolute; and this form is as "eternal" as the absolute. So it has been told us, though without a shadow of a proof. Whence does the author know what he maintains? And how does he get to the assumption of such a form? This we shall doubtless learn best when we see for what purpose he uses it. But he uses it a little further on to deduce by its means the reality from the absolute. Hence his need of this explanation is the true creator, and the real, though concealed, ground of the proof of the Being of such a form.

And thus we have here already exhibited to us, and before our very eyes, this man's conception of philosophy—and his whole course of proceeding. Reality is simply in itself. Of this, not the least doubt is uttered, and it is the fundamental pillar of his system. This can and must be explained, and it is the business of philosophy to furnish this explanation. Of this again, not the least doubt is uttered, and it is the second fundamental pillar of the whole system. In order to get this explanation, we must assume an eternal form, and, for the purpose of filling this form, we must assume an Absolute, which is the third part and realization of this system. Its starting-point, therefore, is the very blindest and stubbornly believing empirism, and an Absolute is assumed only for love of the world. This is the true opinion which this man entertains of the Absolute, for thus he uses it; and if he once and a while, for variety's sake, speaks of immediate cognition and contemplation of the Absolute, such is mere phrase and a

joke, since he does not, in truth, judge and philosophize from such a standpoint, but from its very opposite. At the utmost, there may be the following truth in this, as we will generously suppose to be the case, namely: He comprehends, in a general way, the necessity of an immediate knowledge, if a mediated knowledge is ever to be arrived at; but he knows not how to attain it, nor will he ever get it in his way. As for the rest, this not comprehending his own real opinion, and not remarking his blind empirism, and this, his explaining through an arbitrarily posited hypothesis, characterize the radical blindness of the man, whereof the instance just examined is the eighth in number.

But let us in the meanwhile obtain some further information in regard to this eternal form. "Not the absolute ideal stands under this form, for *itself* is outside of all form, as sure as it is absolute." Outside of all form; hence what was just this moment by the same conception asserted of itself is now denied, without the denial being perceived by our author; which is the ninth blindness. But let us look a little closer, to see what this man is really talking about. The *itself* he italicized also in the original, and it was well to do so, though, from another point of view, it may lead to unpleasant consequences. For I ask: Is this, then, the same one absolute of which it was said above that it must be in the eternal form? I suppose it must be the same; for else we have a second absolute, and have had our trouble with the first absolute all for nothing. But it would surely have been wrong not to take us at once to the true forge of the pregnant and productive absolute. Hence it is nevertheless the absolute which is in the form. But, now again, it is not to be *itself* in the form. Hence we have a self which is at the same time a not-self, an identity which is at the same time a not-identity! Are there, then, no means at hand to show up clearly this utter nonsense? I hope the following will suffice:

I ask, is the absolute wholly and undividedly present in this self-forming, or is it not so present? If the former, then it is in its whole and undivided essence in the form, and it is nowhere and in no other manner except in the form. Our

philosopher does not wish this to be so, because he is afraid of his own independent individuality, which would then vanish away in the absolute. He maintains, therefore, the latter; but if this is so, then the absolute, in thus forming itself, separates into two absolute halves, with one of which it remains out of all form, and with the other one of which itself is in the form. Will our philosopher admit this? I hope not; but in the meanwhile he has asserted it, without knowing what he was speaking about; which is the tenth blindness.

It tires me, and perhaps also the reader, to follow this man step by step and count up his instances of confusedness; and I the more gladly drop the subject here, as the two following lines involve such thick and tough nonsense as to require many words to make it at all current. I add only the conclusion of his explanation of the eternal form.

“This form is, that the ideal, immediately as such, and without, therefore, going outside of its identity, exists also as a real.”

What may this mean: “real?” Well, thinks this man, I suppose every child knows it—and so takes no pains to define his conception. But, nevertheless, we should like to know, what sense he attaches to this conception, and hence must trace it out ourselves from its connections. The author holds real to be the opposite of ideal; the ideal, however, he holds to be—partly according to his own express words, and partly according to the higher degree of clearness which we have thrown upon them by realizing the thinking required by him—that which needs not and is not capable of any other being than it has through its conception; and hence the real must be a being which cannot have any other being than *outside* of the conception, *i. e.*, absolute unconsciousness.

Thus, I say, the real must be thought according to our philosopher, though at other times he is far from thinking it thus; for on page 23 he says: “The form of *the determinedness* of the real enters through the ideal into the soul as *knowledge*.”

At first we had only the self-forming of the ideal, by means of and in the form, into the real, the immediate dissolving of the ideality into reality ($I \times R$); where, then, do we get now

all at once this new form of a higher abstraction, of a *determinedness* of the real through the ideal, which must be reciprocal, and which adds at once to the mere reality the ground of its thus-being (qualitative determination) ($I^F R$); and, moreover, where do we get the *soul*, into which this form of the form enters? It seems, indeed, as if the Wuerttemberg Catechism [allusion to the charge against Schelling, that the theology of the university in Wuerttemberg, where he was now teaching, had induced him to change his views,] has had as much to do with this system as speculation itself. The real deduction of finite things from the absolute he finally succeeds in accomplishing, thereby getting rid of much trouble and annoyance, as follows: "The absolute would not become truly objective in the real, if it did not give the real the power to change, like it, its ideality into reality, and to objectivate this reality in particular forms."

Very well; thus we have gained everything all at once, and the object of all speculation is solved, to everybody's joy and comfort, with immeasurable clearness and ease. There is no doubt that all of us others are the real, wherein the absolute has become truly objective; the power to change our ideality into reality, and to objectivate it in particular forms, belongs also to us, therefore; and hence the whole world will in all probability turn out to be nothing but the exercise of this, our power. If we now but open our senses, or, to use the terminology of our philosopher, exercise the power communicated to us, to change our ideality into reality, we shall doubtless see how this power does objectivate itself in particular forms; and thus we have arrived, indeed, though by a somewhat rough and troublesome circuitous route, at the very point for which I suggested above that the self-comprehension of the absolute might be useful. Whatever may now happen, we shall always be ready to say this is a manifestation of the power to change our ideality into reality, through which power the absolute has become objective in us.

Unfortunately, the joyful emotions which this result might give rise to are quenched soon after by these unexpected and remarkable words: "In one word, from the absolute to the real

there is no gentle gradation ; the origin of the sensuous world '' (remark that this word is made here to have the same meaning as ' the real ') " is to be thought only as a perfect breaking off from the absoluteness, through a sudden leap." Again : " The ground of all finite things cannot lie in a *communication* of reality to them, or to their *substratum* ; — which communication would have to come from the absolute — that ground can lie only in an *estrangement*, in a *falling-off* from the absolute. This equally clear and sublime doctrine [Indeed ! It seems tastes vary] is also the true Platonian doctrine. Only by a falling off or lapse from the original does Plato represent the soul to sink down from its original blessedness. This was also one of the more mysterious doctrines in the Grecian mysteries, to which Plato refers pretty plainly."

Well, if Plato and the Grecian mysteries assumed this, we others must, of course, show the proper respect and submit to it also, although it were to appear that there is no sense or meaning in the whole doctrine, and that this assumption can only be spoken, but never realized in actual thinking.

We vastly suspect that the latter will turn out to be the case. For what is that to be which falls off from the absolute. Two cases alone are possible : either it is the absolute itself, in which case this must fall off from itself, *i. e.*, annihilate itself in itself and through itself, which is absurd ; or it is not the absolute itself, and then it is of, from, and through itself, and we have two absolutes. It would not do to say that the absolute has made this other, and has made it good, and that it has fallen off only afterwards ; for then the possibility to fall off (to lapse) must either have been given to it by the absolute — in which act of giving the absolute would have indeed fallen off from itself, which is the first absurdity — or it must have had that power from and out of itself, which would make it absolute at least in regard to this power, which is the second absurdity.

But, supposing that we overlook all this in our author ; how does this expression agree with all his previous operations ? I beg you, is, then, the absolute really and indeed existent or not ? Is there, then, a word of truth in the becoming objective on the

part of this absolute, in a power to change its ideality into reality, and to objectivate this reality again in various forms, or is there not a word of truth in it? If the former, then reality is indeed explained, and the steady progression from the absolute to the real has been found. But if we assume the latter — and the assertion that the real cannot be explained from the absolute, warrants us in it — then everything that has been said before is now taken back and pronounced untrue, and all speculation — the true as well as that of this system — is forever stopped. Why, then, did the author not wipe out his beginning, after he had come to such an end?

But have we, perhaps, misunderstood him? He proceeds to remark that he has indeed thus deduced something, but that this something is, after all, merely the pure idea; and hence it is possible that the objectivating of his ideality into different forms, whereat we so rejoiced, may also signify merely the abstract acting, but not, as we hoped, at the same time the original representations of the universe. I suggest: Is, then, the idea not real, can it not become real, and is it not in fact realized in the first half of the book, in the proud deduction of our author? O, yes, if we were not too humble to accept such an assumption! “This is all very well,” says the man, “but still it is not the true real, not the *real* real. I only permit the sensuous world to pass for the true real.” But did he, then, never, in the course of his philosophical life, hear the assertion that the sensuous world generally has real existence only in the senses, and the senses only in the idea, as spheres of the independent life of the idea? Now, if he does not want to admit this — as he certainly does not — how then does he, first of all, form his conception of reality? Evidently, only through distinction from the idea — a Being of matter, utterly independent of the idea; and since, doubtless, we are not to have a third besides the idea and matter, independent of anything else, hence a true in-itself, and inner Absolute, the second in number; *i. e.*, if he is at the same time in earnest when he claims the Being of an absolute idea. And thus we find in our philosophical hero, when we come to a serious investigation, nothing but the old and well-known

joke of a materialistic dualism. Not Kant, not the Science of Knowledge, but thou, O holy Leibnitz, pray for him !

Again : how does this man imagine that he protects himself against those who insist on the unity of the absolute, and on the idea, as the only possible reality? He will never find another manner than that which he really does adopt, namely, of appealing to the testimony of his senses and to common sense, and maintaining, by all that is holy, that the material objects must exist, since he sees them, hears them, etc., and that nobody can ever alter this, his belief. Thus drops from our man the mask of speculation, which he always carries a little loosely, and we see the natural skin of the coarsest, blindest empiricism ; and indeed he never utters were it but the suggestion of a suspicion of the in-itself-existence of matter.

Since it is necessary to tell our public everything expressly, and never to assume that anybody will follow one's thinking, and admit the consequences of one's assertions, I add that all natural philosophy rests upon this blind belief, this horror and dismay in the face of matter, and this terror to be self-alive, and not a mere product of nature ; and that all such men can never find another answer for those who oppose them than that they lack feeling. Now, since we live probably quite as much as they, it is to be presumed that we also hear and see quite as well as they, the only difference being that we do not accept these appearances of the senses immediately and at once, upon mere belief, but penetrate them with our comprehension, and thus understand them in their significance as the true real of them. Hence what we lack, indeed, is their blind superstition ; and if they mean this by their "feeling," they are quite right in supposing that we lack something which they possess. May they never learn what fools they became when they considered themselves wise.

To return to our philosopher. This immeasurably clumsy and bungling sophist is, therefore, the man who succeeded in leading the philosophers of our age astray. In the meanwhile it might involve injustice as well towards myself as towards this man if herewith I concluded this chapter. Towards myself, because I do not wish that certain opponents of his of

whom he complains, of whom he has found particularly a number in the district of his present residence, should believe that I have joined them ; towards him, because there was a time when I judged him less disparagingly, and because, since it is known that we once had personal relations, some one might believe he had thus disparaged himself in my esteem in another manner than as a philosopher : Now, as regards, firstly, my former less disparaging judgments, I would have it considered that in these times the man was utterly incapable of philosophical ripeness and clearness by reason of his youth, and that I therefore neither could nor desired to praise in him that ripeness and clearness ; but I hoped that he would be diligent, and did not doubt that by diligence he might succeed in something, and it was only this hope which I expressed. But how I have always judged the philosophical attainments which this man really possesses can be seen in the very first numbers of my *Philosophical Journal*, in one of my notes to an essay written by him, wherein the first traces of the error which has now shaped itself into a “ philosophy of nature ” can be clearly discerned. Those good hopes of mine he has not fulfilled, but allowed himself to be soon corrupted by senseless flatterers, and since then has paid attention to nothing but his pride and self-conceit, being anxious to run ahead in the race of the man whom but to understand he all the while remained incapable.

To separate myself from these opponents of his, whom I do not like to join, I add : I see clearly that if the system of this man is logically carried out, no God remains but Nature, and no morality but that of the manifestations of Nature. But it is as unjust to impugn men for what they merely say as it would be to interpret it to their advantage. Words are, after all, nothing, and only the life is of significance. But so far as the life, the inner religion of this man, is concerned, I of course refrain from all judgment, and hold that the public should do so likewise. So far as his morality is concerned, it may not be improper to also allude to the following :

It seems to have been believed, and it was but lately that I saw the insinuation repeated in a public paper, that the man whom

I have named belonged to those who did not come up to their pledged word when I left Jena. I deem it proper at the present opportunity to deny this. I stood by no means on such a footing with him as that I should have taken his advice on important steps to be taken. Whatever was told him was told him after the step had been taken. The man who, by his unasked-for interference, changed my fixed resolution to resign my position at Jena, in a certain contingency, into an attempt to capitulate, and who thus gave my just and proper resolve — which I approve yet, after the lapse of eight years, and would repeat in the same contingency — the appearance of weakness and double-facedness, was another man, and was only one, not many. In the meanwhile I bear no grudge even against this one, since immediately after the step was taken I condemned myself. For it serves strength but justly if, making common cause with momentary weakness, it finds itself deserted; and I have been reconciled with myself only by the thus acquired certainty that the same thing will not happen again.

Let this, therefore, be said as a last word on the subject, and let us hope that the confused passionateness of those days may now be cooled off, and that it is now understood how it must be all the same to the whole world, excepting the finances of the duchy of Weimar, whether this or that man is professor at Jena, or whether Jena has a flourishing, or a deserted, or no university at all.

Besides all this, what this man seeks and strives to attain by his speculation is by no means anything bad or common, but rather the highest to which man may aspire, the cognition of the unity of all Being with the Divine Being. His purpose is, therefore, worthy of all honor. Mine is the same, and I fulfil it; but he speaks of it only in a roundabout way, and cannot realize it; he puts himself in the way of those who can realize it, and leads others astray who might, perhaps, have listened and understood, if it had not been for him. It is this which causes him my reproaches. He hates and flies from collected reasoning, in which alone lies the remedy of error; and he does this purposely, because he considers it empty clearness,

and thus he makes diffusedness of thought the fundamental principle of all realism, expecting salvation from a blind nature. Now, this is absolute Anti-Philosophy ; and so long as he clings to this maxim, everything he utters is necessarily false, erroneous, and foolish, and not a spark of philosophy can enter his soul. And thus, leaving him as man in all his possible worth, I cast him utterly aside as a philosopher ; and as an artist, I assert him to be one of the greatest bunglers that have ever played with words.

What I have said here against him, being grounded simply in general logic, suffers no contradiction and no evasion, and cannot be refuted. If his co-disputants, sorrowful to see their leader thus treated, should try to refute it, I shall reply or not, as it may please me, for I do not wish to bind myself to it. But to the man I have named I never speak, since we proceed from utterly opposite maxims ; nor have I here spoken to him, but to his public.

HEGEL ON ROMANTIC ART.

[TRANSLATED FROM THE SECOND PART OF THE *ÆSTHETIK*.]

BY WM. M. BRYANT.

CHAPTER III. — OF THE FORMAL INDEPENDENCE OF INDIVIDUAL PECULIARITIES.

If now we take a view of what lies behind us, we see that we have, in the first place, considered personality in its absolute circle ; consciousness in its mediation with God ; the universal process of the spirit reconciling itself within itself. Here the abstraction consists in this : The soul withdrew, by abnegation, into itself from the secular, natural, and human, as such (even where this was moral, and therefore permissible), in order to secure contentment in the pure heaven of the spirit. Secondly, it is true, human subjectivity, without representing the negativity which lay in the former mediation, became affirmative